



Manitoba Association of Multi-age Educators

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Have You Considered Joining the MAME Executive?

By: Kathy Cullen

As I am about to retire, I have begun reflecting upon my 36-year teaching career and have come to realize that one of the most influential factors that helped mold me as a teacher was my decision to join the MAME executive. I have learned a great deal working with this group of hard working, dedicated teachers and over the years, I have developed strong friendships that I will cherish for a lifetime.

Our executive works tirelessly preparing for our MAME MTS Professional Development Day, finding speakers and providing multi-aged workshops for about eight-hundred teachers each October. We also provide workshops throughout the year to our MAME members. We presently have about 20 teachers enrolled in a five-week gardening workshop.

As a member of the MAME executive I have been given the use of an iPad which I keep at school and my students use daily. I have also purchased an iPad for my students, using money I obtained through the MAME Special Projects Grant program.

Over the years I have had access to hundreds of teaching books that I have been able to borrow from our MAME Library. I have also borrowed sets of iPads to use with my students and other equipment such as a Learning Carpet. MAME also provided funding for me to participate in two Northern Arizona University School Study Tours. In July 2010 I participated in a study tour in New Zealand. It was an amazing experience visiting multi-aged schools in various cities in New Zealand. When the opportunity arose again in July 2012, to participate in a similar study tour in Australia, I jumped at the opportunity. This tour was equally amazing visiting various schools throughout Australia. This year MAME is organizing its own Inquiry Study Group that will be visiting three schools in Helsinki Finland. What a wonderful opportunity for MAME members to be able to apply for funding to help pay for this awesome experience!

As I retire from teaching, I would like to thank MAME for being such an important part of my teaching career. Next year I plan to remain on the executive, helping out as I am able, as a member at large. I hope you will consider joining our MAME executive!

Future of Education of Technology Conference (FETC) in Orlando, Florida Jan. 27-30, 2019

By Cindy Pellerin

I had the opportunity to attend the Future of Education of Technology Conference (FETC) which was held in Orlando, Florida January 27-30, 2019 this year. There was a variety of sessions designed to foster hand-on and collaborative learning plus discovering new ways to spark change with technology. I attended various 2-hour sessions that discussed differentiated instructions and learning in the classroom, tools to help students with their academics, plus reading and writing with learning disabilities.

Karen Janowski, Assistive Technology Consultant for Ed Tech Solutions Inc shared 10 Innovative Strategies to Build Literacy Skills for Diverse Learners. Some of the highlights of her session were:

- Google Text to Speech options- highlights as reads
- Capti- can change the speed, languages, and voices
- YouTube Videos- turn on the closed captioning
- Flipgrid- can listen to others and share their stories using technology (free)
- Bookshare- lots of digital books
- News ELA- read and write at own levels with same topics as peers
- Quizzizz- allows students to answer the questions at their own pace

Another session that I attended was 20+ Engineering Challenges You Can Implement Next Week presented by Suzanne Williams and Michelle Snell. They shared different projects using the design process for K-Grade 4s. In our session we did the Cup Tower Challenge: build the tallest tower possible using 4 popsicle sticks, 4 cubes, and 50 cups. We worked in groups trying to build the tallest tower in the allotted amount of time. I

did this activity for 100 day for our school but only used cups. The groups chose between 50 or 100 cups and I bought different sizes of cups so they could choose the best size of cup for them. Some amazing towers were built!

My favourite presenter was Carol Allen who I saw for 2 sessions: Dyslexia: Deep Dive to Success! and Autism Deep Dive. Carol shared many ideas, videos, stories, and lots of information in her sessions. She was very engaged with all of us. She shared, "It is so important that we support our students beyond their academic progress and work to understand and help their emotional strength develop. Wellbeing is the underpinning factor in optimal development and so, with reference to Maslow, we need to ensure that emotional strength is an integral part of their education."

Carol discussed how adults try different types and colours of pens before we purchase them. Kids should have choice and try different writing pens and pencils. Students can write more, neater, and hand feel better if using "the right pen". After returning from Orlando, I bought a variety of blue and black pens as well as coloured ink pens. We spent time testing out the pens: which one was comfortable to hold, weight, tip size, colour of ink more pleasing to each student. Next, they each received a new writing book that they wrote creative stories in. They chose if they would use their pen or pencil during writing time. They wrote more and it was better quality work. Something simple as a special pen made them more engaged in their learning.

The Secret Door- Step through Safestyle's secret door and be transported to some of the most fascinating places across the globe. Students can write what they see in the picture or be a starting point for a story.

Google Earth- the teacher can find different pictures for the students to write about.

Medium simple electronics such as MP3 players and talking buttons can be used by the teacher to record a message that can be played back for the student.

Storylineonline.net has a celebrity reading a book * turn on the closed captioning to assist the visual learners

I learned lots at FETC and am wanting to try these and more of the presenters' recommendations. Thank you to MAME PD Funding in assisting with my registration for this wonderful engaging conference.

iPads in the Classroom

By Michelle Adolph

We have been hearing for years the controversy between too much technology for our children and being left behind in a technological world. This is a very tricky balance that us, as educators, must work with every single day. It is not easy, and it is something that personally, I am very aware of in my class.

I find using an iPad in my class exceptionally helpful for those students who need a little extra help in expressing themselves or in writing as I can use many voice to text programs such as "Dragon Dictation" or "Evernote". It allows for students who cannot write as fast as their brains can compute their ideas put their ideas down as fast as the rest of the class.

Currently, we are using iPads in my school to directly show our parents and guardians our work using "Fresh Grade" – an app that allows for commenting by both students and parents on any photos or videos uploaded by the user. It allows immediate interaction between families and school and has given ownership of work to the students as they upload their choice of materials.

My favourite activity to do with students is to have them do comic strips using "Comic Life" (or any other comic making app) for topics that they may find dry or show little interest in. Our class did comics that we shared with our school on internet safety and how to deal with tricky situation. It allowed all students to be part of showing their knowledge either by writing the script, taking photos and organizing, to brainstorming ideas and being actors in their own strips.

Students were not only engaged, but it allowed for great conversation with their parents during Student-Led Conferences on their learning and the ideas behind their work.

Currently, we are using our iPads to do coding with students after school and have plans between three classrooms to do a Sphero challenge where students have to work their Sphero through a maze they have built using the design process. The ideas are limitless as to what they can do!

With incorporating iPads into our classrooms, my colleagues and I have been able to bridge gaps between students with different skill sets, open communication between home and school, incorporate technology into our curriculum and lesson plans all while still using our tactile skills and not losing touch with our peers. We are hoping we can continue to collaborate our iPads throughout the year while we build our own knowledge of what they can do!



Celebrating La Francophonie à l'École LaVérendrye!

By Angie Houvardas and Lisa Ciangaglini

Did you know that French is spoken on every continent on Earth and in 29 different countries? March 20th is officially the international Francophonie day. During the month of March, Fun en Français came to Ecole LaVérendrye to help us celebrate Francophonie month. They directed workshops, all in French, to our grades 1-6 students. The workshops were a wonderful way to expose students to the diverse French cultures that exist around the world. Students learned about French history, geography, expressions and food through games and hands on activities. Did you know that the French language is spoken in all provinces today, because of the Voyageurs traveling and settling down in various areas of the land we call Canada today? Students also learned about how French is the common language spoken in so many countries in Africa, which allows people to communicate no matter which country they are from. Students worked on developing patience, communication and group work skills. All students had the opportunity to prepare and eat some French cuisine. In the end, students left with a sense of pride for being part of the French speaking community of the world.

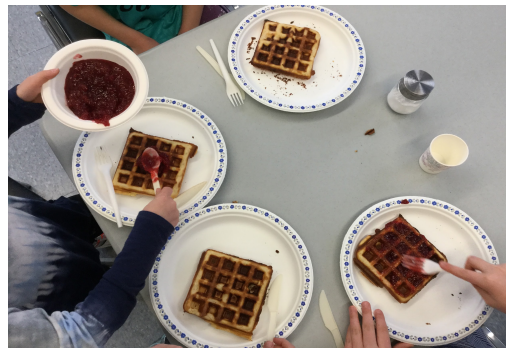


"Fun en Français was super fun (sure does live up to its name!). We played awesome games and we even got to eat delicious Belgian waffles! I sure hope we can go again someday!"

- Grade 5 student

"My favourite part of Fun en Français was EVERYTHING!!"

- Grade 1 student



Students and teachers captured the experience with IPADS and each class will be preparing a page for our school wide diversity book that will be housed in the library to share for years to come. Vive le Français!!

Merci MAME for your generous grant and for helping our students experience La Francophonie in such a meaningful and memorable way!



Special Projects Grant: Break out Boxes

By: Kelci Thompson, 5-8 teacher,
Portage la Prairie School Division

Thank you so much for the opportunity to try a new activity in my multi-grade classroom and school! I teach a classroom with grades 5 – 8. With the money I was able to buy Breakout EDU boxes for the classroom. We were able to use these boxes during math stations, ELA stations and buddies. We will be able to use these boxes for years to come in all subjects!

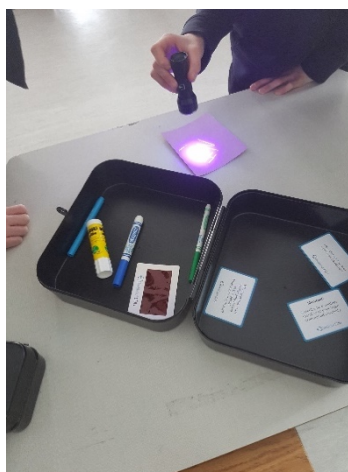


Using breakout boxes in my classroom showed my students that perseverance pays off. Students worked in small groups to figure out a variety of questions, puzzles, etc. They were able to bounce ideas off one another and think outside the box during these activities. Students were put into groups with multiple ages in each group. I included a variety of puzzles that all ages could be successful at.

Math groups used their boxes to solve equations and word problems to be able to open up different combination locks and move forward through the boxes. I was able to include mental math questions, math facts, number strand concepts, and problem-solving strategy questions. The same procedure was used with ELA stations. Students would work through concepts in order to maneuver their way through the lock boxes.

Our “buddies” class was a fantastic way to use the breakout boxes. Older students were able to pair up with younger students to help them read the instructions as English is their second language to German. They helped each other solve the questions to be able to move forward. In buddies we could put students in groups with a variety of ages, or the older students would observe groups of younger students and help give hints to move them forward.

Being able to put the older students into a leadership role really gave each of them a sense of pride and confidence. All of our students from K-8 really enjoyed the activities and we will continue using the breakout boxes all year round! Thank you again for the chance to be able to buy materials like these for my classroom.

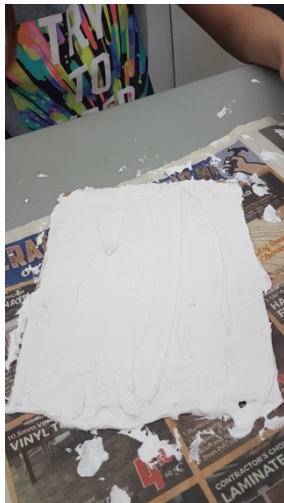


Lunar Landscapes

by Cindy Pellerin

My Grade 4/5/6 class was learning about the Solar System, they were very curious about the Sun, moon, stars, and the planets. During the study of the moon, they created their own lunar (moon) landscapes with craters, rills, and maria with the use of spackling compound, cardboard, sand, marbles, golf balls, and ping pong balls.

1. with a knife they covered a piece of cardboard with spackling compound (used to fill holes in wall).
2. dropped golf balls, marbles, and or ping pong balls all wrapped with aluminum foil onto the spackled cardboard to make craters, rills, and maria. Some students pressed the various spheres into the compound instead of dropping them.
3. sand was sprinkled on top
4. air dry



The National Youth-At-Risk Conference 2019

By: Megan Dooley

The National Youth-At-Risk conference is a conference that touches the heart. The purpose is to train adults who serve youth to create safe, healthy, caring, and intellectually empowering educational environments that foster the well-being of all children and adolescents.

Sessions teach research-based methods that aim to help youth overcome at-risk conditions that may threaten their safety, health, emotional needs, and academic achievement. The NYAR conference considers the whole child when carefully planning teaching and learning. Many inspirational speakers asked educators to contemplate what caring education should look like for learners today.

Joe Hendershott opened the conference by speaking about reaching the wounded student. Mr. Hendershott describes a wounded student as a child who has experienced trauma and is therefore beyond at-risk. Mr. Hendershott explained that we need to understand our students in order to reach them and we need to reach our students in order to transform them. Empathy should be an educator's tool for working with wounded children. He said educators are first responders. We do not have all the training necessary to help youth navigate their challenges; however, we can provide a safe environment for healing to happen. He suggested we use "what" questions instead of "why" questions as the brain does not fully develop until 25 so many of our students are unable to understand the why behind their behaviour. "What" questions also allow someone to tell their story which is integral to understanding and healing. Mr. Hendershott described trauma as false beliefs and asked us if we should consequence children out of trauma or teach them out. He reminded us that every child deserves a chance and left us with a powerful statement to ponder. When someone says children will "take advantage of you" consider responding with, "I'm giving my advantage away."

Dr. Yong Zhao challenged the idea that all children need to gain essential knowledge and skills and suggested that educators focus on helping children find what they are passionate about and good at. He argued that everyone learning the same thing may have been helpful during the industrial revolution but with the diversification of products and globalization, uniqueness and diversity have become valuable. Dr. Zhao believes success lies in cultivating your strengths to add value to the lives of others and make you happy. His teachings veer away from a deficient-based model to a strength-based one and remind us to look at what our students have instead of what they don't.

Jason Johnson presented 10 tools to motivate any student. The Why Try program teaches resiliency to those who have difficulty accessing opportunity, freedom, and self-respect. The program believes helping youth build relationships and see relevance in their education and choices helps them develop resiliency. The program uses visuals to teach the following:

1. Show them that decisions have consequences
2. Help them tear off their labels
3. Teach them to control their defense mechanisms
4. Show them how to use their challenges as positive fuel
5. Compare peer pressure to crabs in a pot
6. Tell them you only lose when you give up
7. Teach them that hard work goes further than natural talent
8. Explain the long-term benefits of keeping laws and rules
9. Show them where to find support systems
10. Help them see the big picture

Dr. Pedro Noguera opened the final day speaking about the difference between equity and equality. He defined equality as everyone receiving the same and equity as everyone getting what they need. He argued we often confuse being gifted with being privileged. He asked us to reflect on whether we have cultivated the right conditions for our students and removed barriers. He likened this to a gardener reflecting on their garden. If all your fruits and vegetables were growing except for your cantaloupes...would you yell at your cantaloupes or change the environment to help them grow?

The NYAR conference was a thought-provoking conference that kept wellness of all children at its heart.

Learning and the Brain Conference

By: Ainsley Viehweg

I had the pleasure of attending the Learning and the Brain Conference in San Francisco, California from February 15-17, 2019. The theme of the conference was Educating with Empathy: Cultivating Kindness, Compassion, Cooperation, and Good Behavior. It was an incredible opportunity to meet with fellow educators from all over North America while attending a variety of sessions put on by leading professionals in the fields of brain-based learning, education, and psychology to name a few.

Multiple presenters spoke about the value of providing Service Learning opportunities for students of all ages. Service Learning is a natural way to cultivate compassion and kindness in children. This is something that we do in schools frequently, however we often miss one key component of Service Learning which is 'closing the circle'. In order for students to develop compassion and kindness from these types of activities it is critically important that we finish these projects with an opportunity for students to in some way see or hear how their work has impacted others. Psychologist Kelly McGonigal

spoke about how when we finish Service Learning projects in this way it provides students with what she calls a 'warm glow'. When students experience this feeling, it makes them want to find other ways to help and continue serving which in turn builds their compassion and empathy towards others.

I would like to thank the Manitoba Association of Multiage Educators for allowing me the opportunity to attend this wonderful event.

iPads in Action

By: Tracy Kremski

Grade1/2 Teacher, Shamrock School

iPads have enhanced the creating, learning, engagement and sharing in our classroom in multiple ways. Using the design process, my Grade1-2 students used iPads to support our learning to research, create and then build a vehicle with our grade 5/6 learning buddies. Together the students created a video that displayed their finished vehicle, showing that it had met the specific criteria. The students then shared this video with their parents via the SeeSaw app.



Another way that the iPads were used in the classroom was by creating short skits that depicted the various personal safety strategies from the Kids in the Know program. Using the iMovie app, students linked their short films to create a class movie which was shared with their parents. Other apps that I found very useful to use with my students were TENS, Ten Frames, Math Slide, Reader, Math Bingo, Power of 2, Candy Block Puzzle and Prodigy. The apps used were all free and valuable.

Thank you so much to MAME for providing me with this great opportunity as my students are more engaged! They are very proud that they have another way to showcase and share their learning.

Purposeful Play-Based Learning

By Christine Clark
Kindergarten Teacher
Neil Campbell School

I recently read an education article that made the accusation “Kindergarten has become the new grade one” and it made me reflect on my own teaching and realize that I was guilty of just that! Over time my teaching style became more and more academic in which subject mastery was the goal and play was what my students did once they were finished their work.

I’m not new to teaching Kindergarten, and in the late 1980’s I did use a play-based approach because that was the popular practise of the time. However, over time the pedagogy shifted to a more academic focus and I, like many other teachers, did too. Now however, guided by the understanding that play is a natural way to learn and therefore a more effective way to learn, the pendulum has swung back towards the play-based approach. Experts agree that “Play and academic work are not distinct categories for young children and learning and doing are also inextricably linked for them. (Ontario Full Day Early Learning Kindergarten Program, 2010). As well, Research has shown social skills to be a better predictor of long-term success than academic skills and conveniently, purposeful play is the perfect vehicle to provide students with opportunities to practise those social skills. In Kristi Mraz’s book Purposeful Play, she writes that “We have to change the narrative of play from something “fun” or “cute” or “for when work is done” to one of play (all play) being purposeful and meaningful for the joyful intellectual and social development for children.”

This year, my grade team partner and I have set out to change our own mental narrative and strived to make the kindergarten classroom a place where students have many opportunities to learn and mature through play. The following are some examples of centers the students developed with our guidance.

Grocery Store: the students began pretending the drama center was a store, so I encourage them to expand on the idea. As a class we planned and created a grocery store. The students designed their own money and made price tags for the grocery items (empty food containers from parent donations). They created signage for the grocery store and wrote shopping lists. Through this fun activity the students met academic goals, they even decided to sort the grocery items into food groups thereby integrating a component of the Health curriculum. Most importantly, they practised their social skills as they spent lots of play time “shopping”.



Café and Bakery: we explored a Gingerbread Man theme which led the students to design and create a café. In this new play center students could “bake” gingerbread cookies, buy them or sit and enjoy the café ambiance while being served pretend milk and cookies by a café server. Again, this play-based learning center leant itself to abundant learning opportunities both in academic and social-emotional development.



Puppet Theatre: the kindergarten classroom was learning about fairy tales and fractured versions of the originals. Out of this evolved another purposeful play center, the puppet theatre. It became the ideal place for students to retell their favorite fairy tale or make up their own fractured version. Students enjoyed both being the performers and the audience. It has also made an ideal segue into the Design Process where the students were asked to design and build their own puppet theatre and puppets.



Post Office: the whole class engaged in the process of designing a Post Office. We brainstormed what we would need and set about making and acquiring the needed items. As a result of their efforts, we have a student-made mail box and mail van, as well as some kindly lent items such as a Canada Post mailbag and parts of the uniform. Now the students are eager to write letters to each other and put them in the student-made mailbox. Those students playing at the center get to sort the mail every day and deliver it to each student's "home" (their cubbies with their address attached). They also write letters to other staff members in the school whom they have a

relationship with, their Reading Buddies their friends and siblings in other classrooms. They have become especially motivated to write letters that need to be delivered outside of our classroom because this provides them with opportunities to "drive" the mail van.



Play-based learning has become an important part of my students' Kindergarten day. Acknowledging that play is a child's natural way to learn has made me take playtime seriously as I try to provide the students with rich opportunities to practise the core subjects, to think up new ideas and explore them, and to navigate the social world of play.

A helpful resource is "A Time for Learning a Time for Joy: A Resource for Kindergarten Teachers" (www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/childhood/k_support.html)

Augmented Reality in the Classroom

By: Lisa McAvoy
Marion School

I was fortunate enough to be able to attend this year's Future of Education Technology Conference in Orlando, Florida. While there I participated in a number of informative sessions that included topics such as: coding, STEAM and assistive technology. One session that introduced me to a topic I knew very little about was on augmented reality.

The session "Engaging Early Learners with Augmented Reality" was presented by Gayle Berthiaume, a former teacher and now a consultant, trainer and author. She demonstrated a number of apps and products that use augmented reality to engage students with educational content.

Augmented reality is a technology that superimposes a computer-generated image on a user's view of the real world. I was most familiar with augmented reality with its use in virtual reality glasses, but I was introduced to some apps and products that can bring augmented reality onto the classroom using iPads.

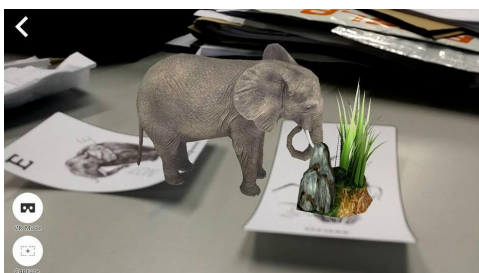
I was very interested in learning about augmented reality books. One example shown was *Ernie's Wish Trail* by Maia Orion. This board book tells the story of a pig named Ernie who wishes to be someone else. Throughout the book Ernie learns the joys of being himself. The book can be read as a standalone but by using the accompanying app (free from the iTunes app store) the book comes alive with moving 3D images and sounds overlaid over the illustrations. You can download the app before purchasing the book to see a demo. The book is available on Amazon.ca.



Another app that was demonstrated was *My Very Hungry Caterpillar AR*. (\$6.99 by StoryToys Entertainment). This app does not need a physical book to be used but it does bring the beloved Eric Carle character to life with a colourful and fun AR experience. The caterpillar character and its environment are superimposed over the user's real-life environment and users engage with the character by feeding the caterpillar and completing various activities. It should be noted there is a non-augmented reality version of this app available by the same publisher.



Other AR products introduced during the session were a series of informational flashcards produced by Octagon Studio (www.octagonstudio.com). These flashcards featuring topics such as: dinosaurs, animals, the human body, and space, enhance learning with the augmented reality experience and allow users to interact with the content.



Math Ninja AR is a free app where kids move their device around to navigate around a virtual village to view and solve addition, subtraction, multiplication and division facts.

AR Tour Ocean is a free app that displays a virtual ocean onto your real-life environment. Users move around with their device to explore the ocean and view various ocean creatures.

Finally, probably the most useful AR tools I learned about was the Google Translate Images feature. Users can use their device's camera along with the Google Translate app to instantly translate written text in the world around them. The original text is virtually translated right on the device's screen. I can see this being extremely useful and also fun to use in a classroom. Students no longer need to flip through dictionaries to translate words or phrases but can instantly translate text right before their eyes.

I was impressed with how easy these apps are to use as well as the number of augmented reality apps and products currently available. I have described only a handful of those introduced during the session. One downside to using these in the classroom is that while the apps may be free there are usually additional in-app purchases or other physical products that need to be purchased. However, augmented reality is definitely a modern, fun way to engage students and have them interact with educational content.

I would like to thank MAME for the opportunity to attend The Future of Education and Technology Conference by providing support through their professional development fund.

DID YOU KNOW?

Your MAME group has professional development funds available for our members to use. Simply go to our website and apply under PD Funding. You are eligible for up to \$300.00 to attend professional development opportunities.

Visit www.multiagemanitoba.org to complete your application.

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Submit an Article to Our Newsletter

This newsletter is created by our membership for our membership and we would love to hear from more of our members. Is there something exciting happening in your classroom or school? Do you have a teaching experience or thoughts on multi-age education that you would like to share? Please do! You can email your submissions including images any time to lisa.mcavoy@lrsd.net

Special Project Grants

Is there a special project that your school would like to undertake or participate in?

MAME members can apply for funding of up to \$1000 for Special Projects.

Visit www.multiagemanitoba.org to complete your application.

The MAME Library

MAME has been accumulating resources that are relevant to multi-age educators. These materials are available for loan to our members. To view a list of titles, go to our website, www.multiagemanitoba.org and click on the Lending Library tab. To borrow MAME resources, please contact Charlene Sacher at: charlene.sacher@gmail.com